



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CARLOS A. GIMENEZ
MAYOR

July 13, 2011

Dear Fellow Residents of Miami-Dade County:

This budget is a beginning.

During the two weeks since I took office as Mayor, my top priority has been finding ways to cut property taxes while preserving essential services. Just as many of you are making difficult decisions and sacrifices in your own lives to meet the demands of this difficult economy, I have committed to ensuring that your Miami-Dade County government makes the difficult, but very necessary sacrifices needed to live within its means while still delivering quality service to you, our patrons.

During my campaign for Mayor, I promised to lighten the burden on homeowners and small businesses – this budget cuts taxes by more than \$200 million, undoing last year's rate increases. I promised to hold true to our critical missions – this budget protects seniors, children and public safety. I promised to shrink government – this budget eliminates nearly 1,300 positions.

Many difficult decisions were required to accomplish these savings given the vast and varied services our County provides: the water we drink, the roads we use, our neighborhood parks and public libraries, public transportation, sanitation, firefighters, police, code compliance officers, medical examiners, advocates who investigate consumer complaints, vets who care for stray animals, facilities that feed the poor and shelter the homeless. All service adjustments are outlined in the attachments to this document.

In collective bargaining we are proposing concessions in salary and benefits, including a freeze of longevity payments, merit adjustments, flexible pay, and premium pay; a rollback of the recently implemented 3% cost-of-living adjustment, and an increased contribution by employees towards the cost of health insurance – 10% of salary rather than 5% of salary. I have already implemented these adjustments for non-bargaining employees under my purview.

This book includes charts and illustrations showing how your tax dollars and other revenues of the County are spent. More detailed information regarding expenditures proposed for each County department is also included.


While this budget reflects changes throughout county government, there is still much work to be done in the months ahead. We must achieve a level of spending that is sustainable for the next several years as our economy recovers. As I lead this administration in continued strategies to make county government smaller, more affordable and more efficient, it is my intention to keep the residents informed every step of the way.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the staff responsible for providing the information and analysis in this document and implementing the plan outlined in this proposed budget. They are dedicated public servants who care deeply about our community and are making shared sacrifices to ensure that it is properly served by its county government. I am proud to be leading them.

In the coming weeks, we will launch the County's Transparency Website to keep you informed about your local and regional government. Between now and October 1, when the new budget goes into effect, there will be a number of public meetings and hearings to give residents the opportunity to weigh in on this proposed budget. I encourage everyone to be part of the process that determines how your tax dollars will be put to use.

In closing, be assured that I am fully committed to delivering a county government that lives within its means, shares the sacrifices that you, our residents, are making and delivers quality public service every day.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carlos A. Gimenez', with a stylized, flowing script.

Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor